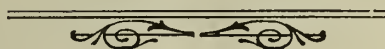


= ILMINSTER =
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.



The Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health,

FOR THE

ILMINSTER URBAN DISTRICT,

For the Year ending

December 31st, 1911.

MEMBERS OF THE ILMINSTER URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

(FOR 1911.)

Mr. John Taylor, (*Chairman.*)

„ J. Grabham, (*Vice-Chairman.*)

„ F. T. Adams.

„ R. Coombes.

„ T. B. Edmonds.

„ G. E. Parrett.

„ J. R. Paull.

„ A. Poole.

„ G. T. Rogers.

„ S. Rowe.

„ J. F. Sanders.

„ H. H. Shepherd.

„ J. Duke, *Solicitor, Clerk.*

„ G. W. Warry, *Surveyor and
Sanitary Inspector.*

Dr. Harold Downes, *Medical Officer of Health.*

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present you with my Annual Report of the sanitary condition and vital statistics of your district for the year ending December 31st, 1911.

The post of Medical Officer of Health was resigned by Dr. Maidlow in June, 1911, and my appointment, at first temporary, was confirmed in October. I am therefore personally responsible only for the latter half of the year.

Before proceeding further I would wish to allude to the valuable services rendered by Dr. Maidlow during his long tenure of office. The excellence of his work, and his thorough knowledge of the sanitary requirements of the district, are well known to the Council, and it will be difficult to emulate the success to which he attained in carrying out the duties of the post which he has vacated.

	Census 1901.	Census 1911.
POPULATION, - - -	2,304.	2,467.
NUMBER OF INHABITED HOUSES,	542.	601.
Average Number of Persons per house,	4.20.	4.10.
ACREAGE - - -	529.	529.

OCCUPATION. A market town with some shirt and collar factories.

TABLE I.**Vital Statistics of whole District during 1911 and previous Years.**

Year.	Population Estim'd to middle to each year.	Births.			Total Deaths reg. in Dist.		Transferable Deaths.		Nett Deaths belonging to the District.			
		Uncorrected number	Nett.		Number.	Rate.	of Non- residents reg. in Dist.	of residents not reg. in Dist.	Under 1 Year.		At all Ages.	
			Number.	Rate.					Number.	Rate per 1000 Nett Births.	Number.	Rate.
1906	2297	48	48	20·8	19	8·2		1			20	13·9
1907	2300	40	40	17·3	26	11·3		1			27	11·7
1908	2302	49	49	21·2	29	12·5		0			29	12·5
1909	2304	41	41	17·8	30	13·2		0			30	13·2
1910	2306	44	44	19·0	28	12·1		0			28	12·1
1911	2467	38	38	15·4	28	11·3	0	5	2	52·6	33	13·3

TABLE II.**Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the
Year 1911.**

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.	At all ages.	Under 1	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 45	45 to 65	65 and upw'ds
Erysipelas ..	4			1	2		1	
Scarlet fever ..	2				2			
Phthisis, under Tuberculosis Reg- ulations, 1908. }	1					1		
Totals	7			1	4	1	1	

TABLE III.**Causes of, and Ages at Death during the Year 1911.**

CAUSES OF DEATH.		Deaths in the whole District at subjoined ages.							
		All ages.	Under 1	1 to 2	2 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 45	45 to 65 and upw'ds
All causes	Certified	33							
	Uncertified	0							
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis)		5					2	2	1
Other Tuberculous Diseases		1	1						
Cancer, Malignant Disease		4						1	3
Broncho-Pneumonia		1							1
Pneumonia (all other forms)		1						1	
Other diseases of Respiratory organs		3		1					2
Accidents & Diseases of Pregnancy & Parturition other than Puerperal Fever		1						1	
Other defined Diseases		15						2	2
Diseases ill-defined or unknown		1							1

TABLE IV.**Giving the Causes of Death of Children under 1 Year, i.e.—the “Infantile Mortality.”**

Tuberculosis 1.

Premature birth 1.

Nett Births in the year	legitimate	36	Nett Deaths in the year	legitimate infants	2
	illegitimate	2		illegitimate infants	0

A Rate of 52.6 Births registered, calculated from 38 Births in an estimated population of 2,467.

Zymotic Death Rate for "7 chief epidemic diseases"
= 0.

**Report of the Sanitary Inspector of Nuisances
 remedied during 1911.**

New Gullies.	Choked drains and W.C's.	Refuse.	Nuisance on Highway.	Lime Whitening.	Smoke Nuisance.	Defective drains.	Pigs kept within 50 ft. of dwelling house.	Insufficient & defective W.C. accom- modation.	TOTAL
3	5	1	1	6	1	2	1	2	22

G. W. WARRY,

Sanitary Inspector.



Geology.

Except at Winterhay, where there is alluvial gravel in the bed of the Ile, Ilminster is chiefly situated on the Upper and Lower Lias, a formation consisting of bands of sandy limestone with intervening clay.

Vital Statistics.

The 33 deaths were distributed between 20 males and 13 females; the 38 births between 17 males and 21 females. The death-rate, 13·3, shows a slight increase, and this increase is greater than the figures indicate, as the Census of 1911 clearly shows that the population during the past few years has been under-estimated. Of the 33 deaths, 5 were due to senile decay, 6 to Tuberculosis, and 4 to Cancer. The Birth-rate, it will be noticed, shows a fairly steady decrease.

Infectious and Contagious Diseases.

The District has been fairly free from infectious diseases. Two cases of Scarlet Fever were notified, both occurring in the same house. These were promptly isolated, and the disease did not spread. Four cases of Erysipelas occurred. This disease seems rather prevalent in the town. Of Pulmonary Tuberculosis one case was notified. This has now become compulsorily notifiable in all cases, and not merely among "poor persons" as under the Tuberculosis Regulations, 1908. A scheme for dealing with these cases is under consideration by the County Medical Officer of Health. In the meantime steps will be taken to deal with such cases as are notified in this district, such as the provision of disinfectants and spitting flasks, and the distribution of leaflets dealing with the disease. It is highly essential that the public should be educated in regard to the infectivity of Pulmonary Tuberculosis, and that after

a death has taken place the patient's clothing and bedding should be disinfected and the premises thoroughly cleansed and lime-washed, the paper being stripped from the walls. I am doubtful of the value of ordinary disinfection in such cases, unless the above steps are also taken.

Meteorology.

The Rainfall has been carefully recorded by Mr. W. Beckwith, to whom I am indebted for the following figures. There has been a marked absence of rain during the summer months. The total Rainfall for the year was much below the average, and more than one third of the total fell during the month of December.

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total
1910	2·7	3·97	·755	2·205	1·89	3·21	3·33	4·26	·425	5·865	3·935	7·38	39·93
1911	·98	·91	2·485	1·71	1·46	2·13	·18	1·13	·96	3·575	3·205	9·945	28·665

Midwives Act.

The Midwives on the Roll have been visited periodically by the County Inspector, and no complaints have been received. Since the Midwives Act came into force many unregistered midwives have ceased to practice as such. The Clause in the Act which permits women not registered to "render assistance in cases of emergency" seems, however, to allow of considerable latitude in its application.

Water Supply.

In spite of the long summer drought no shortage of water was complained of, the supply being both plentiful and of good

quality. Recent analyses testify to the purity of the water and its fitness for domestic purposes generally. There is no doubt, however, that a good gravitation system would be of advantage.

Dairies and Cow Sheds.

These have been fairly well kept, and when inspected there has been little to criticise. Verbal suggestions as to lime washing and the more frequent removal of manure have been made in one or two instances, and have been promptly attended to.

Disposal of Refuse.

Complaints have been received relative to the dépôt at Cross, where the refuse has been deposited and screened. There is no question that the close proximity of dwelling houses made this dépôt a most unsuitable spot for the purpose. Arrangements have now been made for the removal of refuse to a distance from the town, and no doubt no further nuisance will be occasioned.

I think it is very desirable that the refuse should be collected in covered dust-carts, and also that covered dust-bins should be provided for each house.

Sewage Farm.

No complaints have been received, and the farm has been found to have been satisfactorily managed.

Factories and Workshops Act.

There are 8 factories within the meaning of the Act, 25 workshops, and 5 work-places, all of which are periodically inspected. The houses of the out-workers are kept under observation. No written notices have had to be issued.

Miscellaneous.

The general sanitary condition of the town is satisfactory. The County Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Savage, paid a visit in December and seemed satisfied with what he saw. The Laboratory of the County Council is now available, and free examinations are now made of Diphtheria swabs, sputum, blood, and for suspected Ringworm, &c. This will doubtless be of great benefit in the early diagnosis of suspected cases.

Weekly reports of infectious disease are now sent to the County Medical Officer of Health and to the Local Government Board. These are collated and a weekly schedule sent to each local Medical Officer of Health, and by this means we are kept informed as to the prevalence of infectious diseases both in the county and throughout the country generally.

The Medical Inspection of School Children continues to be of benefit in the recognition of defective conditions of health which might otherwise pass unnoticed. A good feature is the strong line which is being taken in regard to the verminous condition of some of the children, rather a common failing in factory towns, and one hitherto difficult to deal with.

There has been a steady increase in the number of conscientious objections to vaccination, and in consequence a largely unvaccinated population is growing up. In the opinion of many of the leading authorities on public health the time is not far distant when an epidemic of Smallpox will have to be faced, and I would remind the Council that no arrangements exist for the isolation of cases which might occur in the district.

The Housing, Town Planning, &c. Act, is now in force, and inspection work under its provisions is in active progress

At present the results in the detection of overcrowding and sanitary defects are not of sufficient importance to call for remark.

The Recreation Ground is now in use, and sanitary conveniences have been provided for those making use of it.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

HAROLD DOWNES, M.B.,

(Medical Officer of Health.)

Ilminster, February, 1912.



